STEM Spotlight

Spy Hop **ENGAGES** Students in **STEM** Through the **ARTS**

Spy Hop successfully integrates the arts with STEM, creating a learning atmosphere around technology and art through film, design, music, programming and more.

Their mission is to mentor young people in the digital media arts to help them find their voice, tell their stories, and be empowered to affect positive change in their lives, their communities, and the world.

Since 1999, Spy Hop has mentored Utah's young people in the digital media arts as a vehicle for free expression, self-discovery, critical thinking and skilled participation. Their afterschool and community programs in film, audio, design and music production are a model for youth

Musical Arts Mentor Jeremy Chatelain works with Musicology students in writing their own songs and working together as a band.

development programs across the nation and Spy Hop is recognized by the White House as a leading nonprofit arts and humanities organization.

For the past three years, after receiving funding from Utah's legislature, Spy Hop has impacted students statewide through assemblies, reaching rural and underprivileged areas.

"These students do not have access to the media arts education that we offer and being able to show them that has been pretty amazing," said Jana Davis, Outreach and Programs Coordinator at Spy Hop. "We did an assembly in a rural community in Southern Utah and one third grade student at the school has since started making video games and

Audio Mentor Myke Johnson teaches students at Granite Park Jr. High about careers in audio engineering.

he's been sending those to us over the last year."

All of their assemblies are cross-curricular, for example, when they teach video game design, they also teach programming, and tie-in story telling and coding.

"Each assembly is different for every school," Davis said. "I like working with teachers and administrators to bring a unique, tailored experience to their school."

Spy Hop's programs are especially beneficial to non-traditional students.

"Our kids are so smart, but not in conventional ways," said Martha Taylor, the community connected learning and internship coordinator at the Academy for Math, Engineering, and Science (AMES). "They are not the type to sit in the classroom and take dedicated notes and then regurgitate that on a test. They are the kids who are thinking laterally and in circles. Spy Hop has given them a creative outlet to process their thoughts and be accepted for who they are."

One of Taylor's students struggled with reading and struggled to participate in class. Taylor worked to build a learning pathway that would help this student learn to read, including enrolling him in Spy Hop classes.

"This past year my student discovered Spy Hop and since then he raises his hand, he participates and he's blossomed because of his experience with this program," Taylor said.

In the past year, Spy Hop's in-studio programs have impacted 808 students, and their statewide outreach and in-school programs have impacted 9,677 students.

"The programs that they do on site are just a godsend for students and for some of our students it's life saving," said Taylor.

If you are interested in signing your school up for Spy Hop's free programs, please visit their facility or contact them at 801-532-7500.

Spy Hop's Loud and Clear Youth Radio on 90.9 KRCL gives students opportunities to share their stories with a large audience.